MARVEL
002
SPURRIER
WIJNGAARD
STAR WARS™
DOCTOR APHRA
ANNUAL

DOCTOR APHRA ANNUAL II
WINLOSS AND NOKK

The evil Empire rules the galaxy with an iron fist. But the more Imperial forces tighten their grip, the more star systems slip through their fingers. Criminals and fringe factions thrive!

Rogue archaeologist Doctor Aphra is no stranger to risk in the pursuit of credits and thrills, ever on the hunt for the rarest and most valuable artifacts in the galaxy.

Others, like monster-hunting team Winloss and Nokk, make their living even more dangerously....

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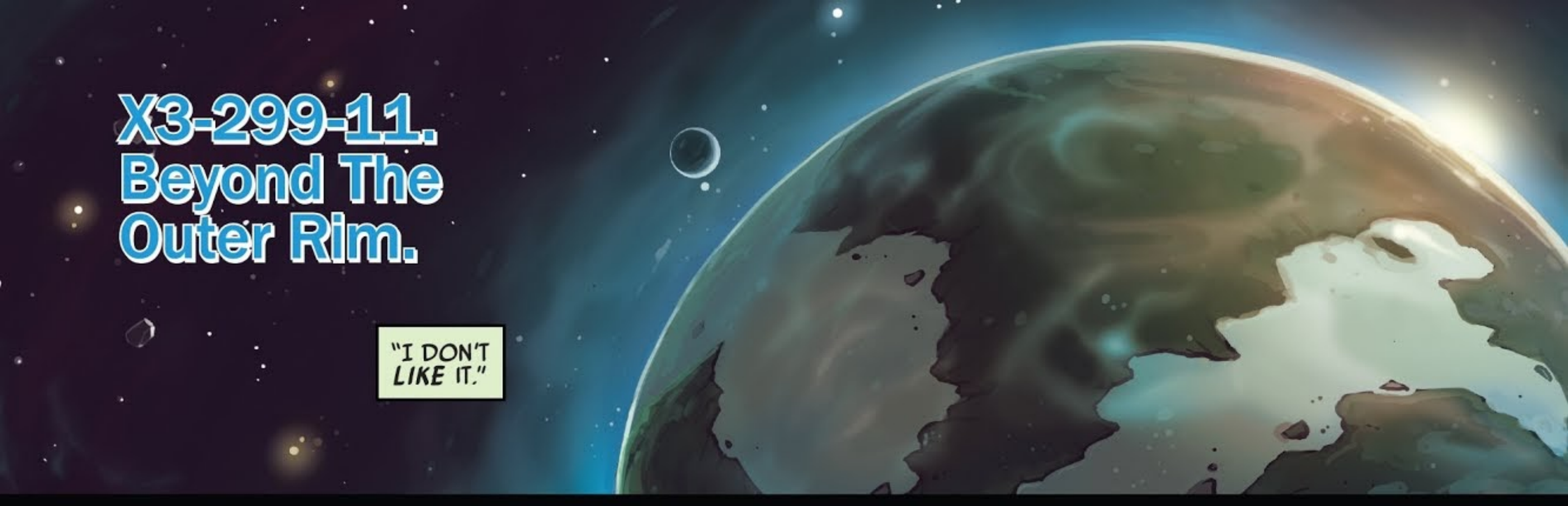
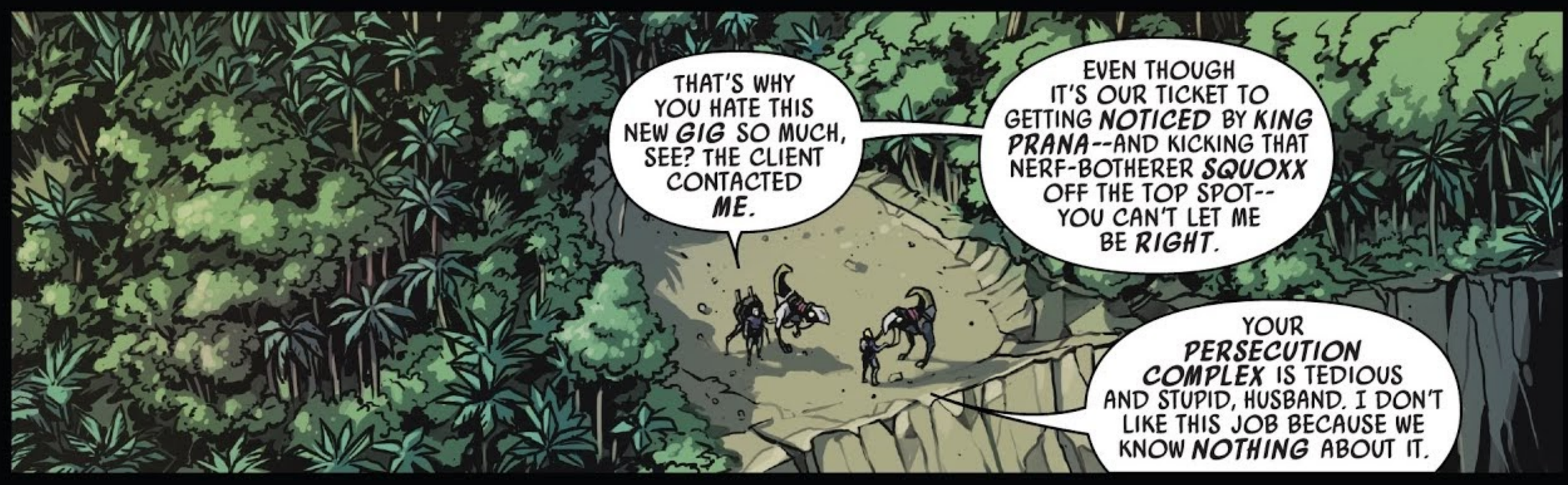

X3-299-11. Beyond The Outer Rim.
"I DON'T LIKE IT."

"YOU DON'T LIKE ANYTHING, NOKK. YOU'RE FAMOUS FOR IT. YOU DON'T EVEN LIKE ME, AND WE'RE MARRIED."
"STOP FISHING FOR COMPLIMENTS, WINLOSS."

I'M NOT. IT'S JUST A FACT! I MEAN, SURE, YOU LOVE ME--BUT LIKE ME? NUH-UH.
YOU THINK I TALK TOO MUCH AND I GOT NO SCRUPLES AND, ABOVE ALL, YOU'RE STILL MAD ABOUT THAT BLACK-MARKET TUTORIAL DROID ON TATOOINE.
SSSSS.


THAT'S WHY YOU HATE THIS NEW GIG SO MUCH, SEE? THE CLIENT CONTACTED ME.
EVEN THOUGH IT'S OUR TICKET TO GETTING NOTICED BY KING PRANA--AND KICKING THAT NERF-BOTHERER SQUOXX OFF THE TOP SPOT--YOU CAN'T LET ME BE RIGHT.
YOUR PERSECUTION COMPLEX IS TEDIOUS AND STUPID, HUSBAND. I DON'T LIKE THIS JOB BECAUSE WE KNOW NOTHING ABOUT IT.

AND, FOR THE RECORD, I OFTEN TELL YOU WHEN YOU'RE RIGHT.
OH YEAH? GIMME ONE EXAMPLE WHEN YOU'VE AGREED WITH ME.
SSS. I'LL GIVE YOU TWO.

YOU DO TALK TOO MUCH, AND I DON'T LIKE YOU.
'TIL THE STARS FALL DOWN?
HM.

INCIDENTALLY, IF YOU MENTION THAT *TUTORIAL DROID* ONE MORE TIME--
LOOK, I *TOLD* YOU! ALL I DID WAS BUY SOME *PICKPOCKETING ROUTINES*. I WEAR THIS FREAKIN' *SPIDER RIG*, HON--I MIGHT AS WELL *TRICK IT OUT*.

HOW WAS I S'POSEDA KNOW THE DUMB DROID WOULD GET THE WRONG IDEA ABOUT--Y'KNOW, *INTERFACING?*
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT.

BUT--
WE'RE PROFESSIONAL *BEAST* TRAPPERS, WINLOSS. TRAPPERS OF BEASTS. MONSTROUS ALIENS THAT WILL TEAR OFF YOUR STUPID MAMMAL HEAD AND LAY LARVAE IN YOUR STUPID MAMMAL CHEST.
WE MUST BE *ABOVE* SUCH PETTY JEALOUSIES.

ALSO "LEARNING TO PICKPOCKET" IS *LITERALLY* THE WORST EXCUSE FOR *FRATERNIZING* WITH PROMISCUOUS MACHINES.
OH *COME* ON! THE SORTSA SCUM *WE* DEAL WITH, I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE *USEFUL!* THAT'S--
SPEAKING OF WHICH: THIS IS THE *RENDEZVOUS POINT*. YOUR *COMM'S* CHIMING.
DEEET DEEET

IT'S THE *CLIENT*.
PROFESSIONAL FACE.
PROFESSIONAL FACE.

GUYS! YOU MADE IT! THAT'S GREAT!

SO, LISTEN-- I SUGGEST YOU KEEP WALKING, HUH? TIME'S KINDA TIGHT HERE.

THAT'S YOUR BIG PLAYER? A SCRAWNY WARMBLOOD WITH SHIFTY EYES?

HEY, THIS APHRA LADY'S OFFERING BIG MONEY, OKAY? CAN YOU TRY NOT TO SOUND SO DISAPPROVING?

ONLY IF YOU TRY NOT TO SOUND SO DESPERATE.

GUYS.

BUT WE ARE DESPERATE.

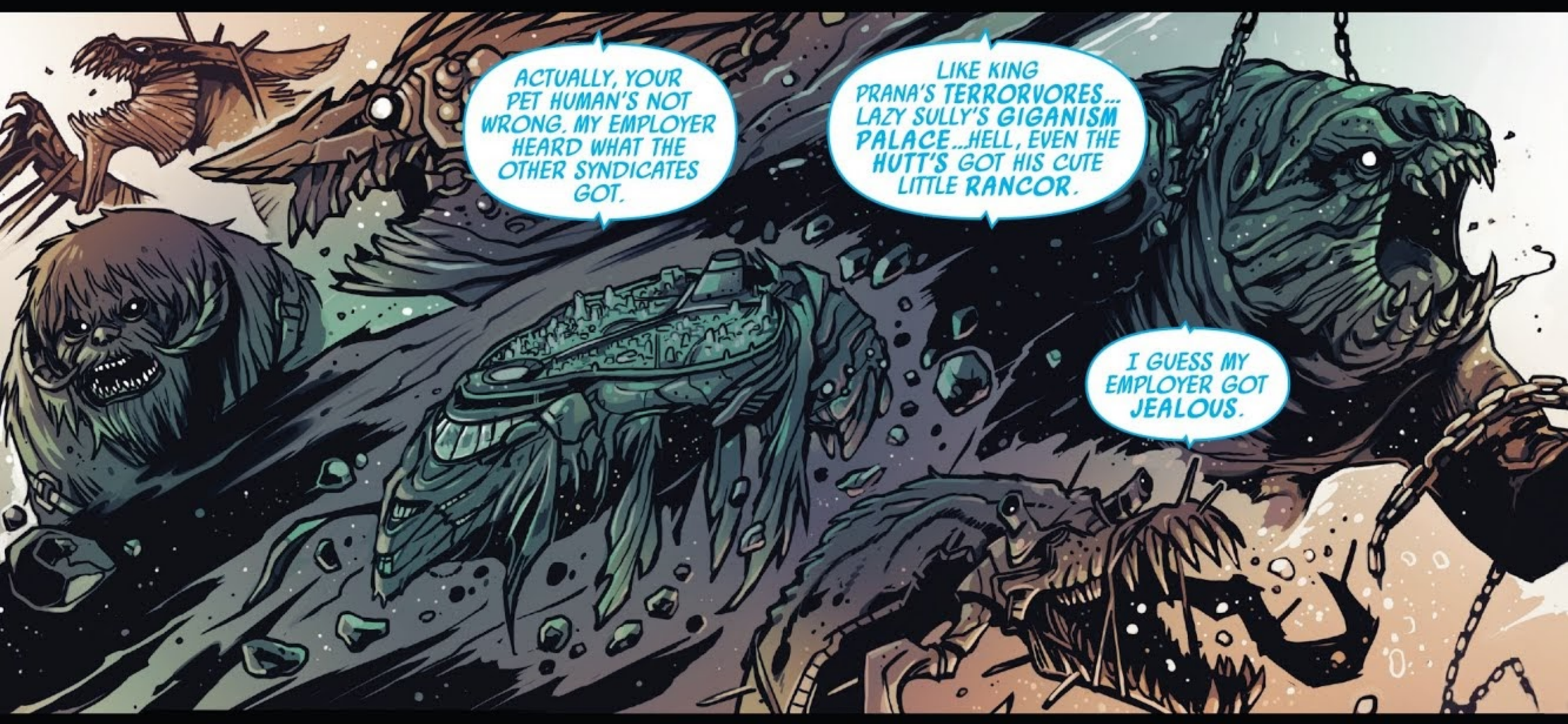
GUYS! SHUT UP AND LISTEN!

HERE'S THE DEAL. I REPRESENT A-- LET'S SAY--A BUSINESSPERSON OF AMBIGUOUS LEGALITY.

YOU MEAN A MOBSTER.

SMART LIZARD.

THE BOSS TENDS TO GET WHAT HE WANTS, AND RIGHT NOW WHAT HE WANTS IS AN ENORMOUS DEADLY MONSTER.
IT'S THE MUST-HAVE ACCESSORY FOR THE DISCERNING CRIME FIGUREHEAD, MA'AM!
STOP BEING SYCOPHANTIC, WINLOSS.


ACTUALLY, YOUR PET HUMAN'S NOT WRONG. MY EMPLOYER HEARD WHAT THE OTHER SYNDICATES GOT.
LIKE KING PRANA'S TERRORVORES... LAZY SULLY'S GIGANISM PALACE...HELL, EVEN THE HUTT'S GOT HIS CUTE LITTLE RANCOR.
I GUESS MY EMPLOYER GOT JEALOUS.

WHEN HE WANTS THINGS, HE COMES TO ME, AND I--VOID HELP ME--HAVE COME TO YOU.
AND WE'RE SO GRATEFUL! THIS COULD REALLY PUT OUR NAMES ON THE MAP AS MONSTER HUNTERS, SO--
WHAT SORT OF CREATURE ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

OHHH--THE USUAL. BIG. MYTHICAL. NIGH ON IMMORTAL. =KOFF= POSSIBLY THE MOST DEADLY CREATURE THAT EVER EXISTED.
STANDARD.

WELL, JUST--UM. POINT US AT IT, I GUESS.
YEAH, THAT'S--THE OTHER THING...

...THE JOURNEY'S ALWAYS HALF THE FUN--DON'T YOU THINK?

AND, AH, IT'S LIKE I SAID.

TIME'S TIGHT.

AHAHA. PRETTY CRAZY, RIGHT? A NONLETHAL TRANDOSHAN! THAT'S--THAT'S OUR GIMMICK, ACTUALLY.
I DON'T CARE.

SEE, NOKK HAS THIS--IT'S THIS WHOLE THING--YOU SHOULD HEAR HER STORY--I MEAN, WOW, TALK ABOUT TRAUMATIC--
I LITERALLY DON'T CARE.

--BUT THE BOTTOM LINE IS, WE'RE ALL ABOUT CONSERVING RARE CREATURES--FOR, Y'KNOW, BREEDING AND CLONING AND--HUGE REWARDS--WHATEVER--SO--
HEY! I REALLY DON'T CARE.

IF YOU USE BLASTERS, MY BOSS WILL HAVE YOU TORTURED TO DEATH. THAT'S THE START AND END OF HOW MANY DAMNS I GIVE. GOT IT?
GOT IT.

WE'LL USE A VR'GEDIAN TRANQUILIZER HARPOON. NO LASTING DAMAGE.
WHATEVER. OKAY, NOW, LISTEN--GUYS--
NUH-UH--THE ELECTRO CUDGELS ARE WAY BETTER SUITED FOR THE BIG SPECIMENS.
GUYS?
HARPOON. NO ARGUMENTS.

NOKK, THE CUDGELS ARE CLEARLY SUPERIOR, AND YOU'RE ONLY DISAGREEING BECAUSE--
GUYS!

DUCK!
WHAT?

NOKK-- LOOK.

THAT'S RO THRAN. H-HE'S THE ONE WHO CAUGHT THE BULL KRYKNA FOR THE TYN SYNDICATE.

EXPLAIN.
WELL, I GUESS MAYBE SOME OTHER MOBSTERS'VE HAD THE SAME IDEA. LUCKY FOR US THEY F--
I MEAN EXPLAIN WHY A VOLLEY OF NEEDLE MISSILES JUST TRIED TO IMPALE US.

AND HOW YOU KNEW THEY WERE COMING.
OH, THAT.
DON'T STAND UP YET!

I DON'T LIKE THIS.
APOLOGY ACCEPTED.

OKAY, CARDS ON THE TABLE. WHAT THIS IS, IS YOUR BASIC ANCIENT-TOMB INVASION. MYSTICAL TEMPLE FROM THE GALACTIC DAWN, ARCHAEOTECH TRAPS...
...AAAAAND A VORACIOUS MONSTER GUARDIAN AT THE CENTER.

ONLY DIFFERENCE IS, WHEREAS YOUR AVERAGE THIEF IS LOOKING TO KILL THE BEAST AND STEAL THE PRICELESS TOTEM IDOL, THIS TIME-- UH --
OOOOOOH.

DON'T LOOK AT THE VORTEX OF FIERY DEMATERIALIZATION!

HEAD DOWN! HEAD DOWN!

HPMH. THE FOOLISH WOMAN SHOULD'VE WARNED ME SOONER. IT'S NOT MY FAULT I'M ATTRACTED TO WARM LIGHT.

TRUST ME. I'M AN ARCHAEOLOGIST.

SO--WHY AREN'T YOU AFTER THE--THE PRICELESS TOTEM THINGY?

OR HERE IN PERSON?

YOU WERE SAYING? THIS TIME WE'RE HERE FOR THE GUARDIAN, NOT THE TREASURE, RIGHT?

I HAVE, UH-- COMPLICATED PRIORITIES. AND I'M VERY BUSY.

EXACTLY. AND LISTEN, I'VE GOT ALL THE ANCIENT TEXTS ABOUT THIS TEMPLE YOU COULD EVER NEED.

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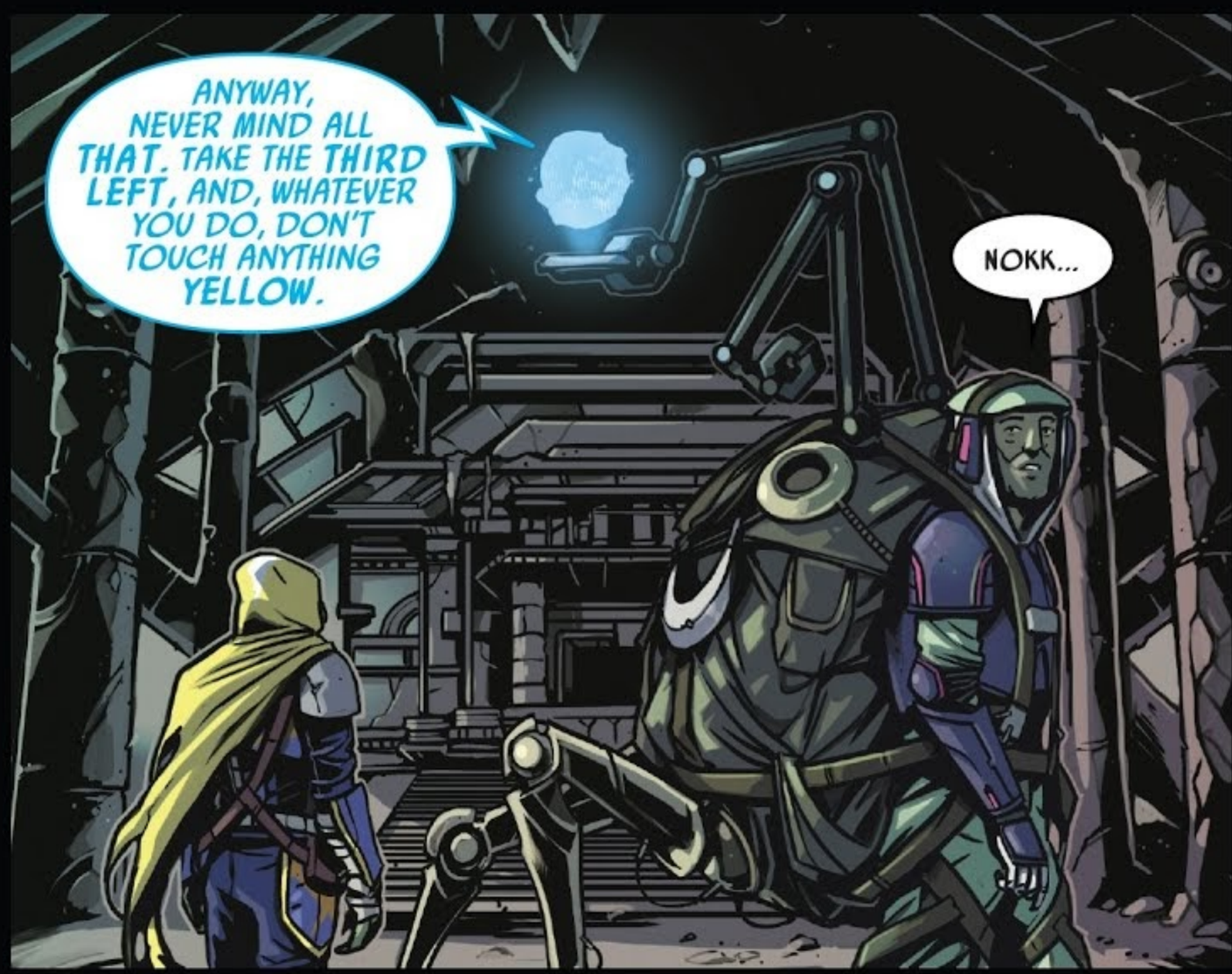
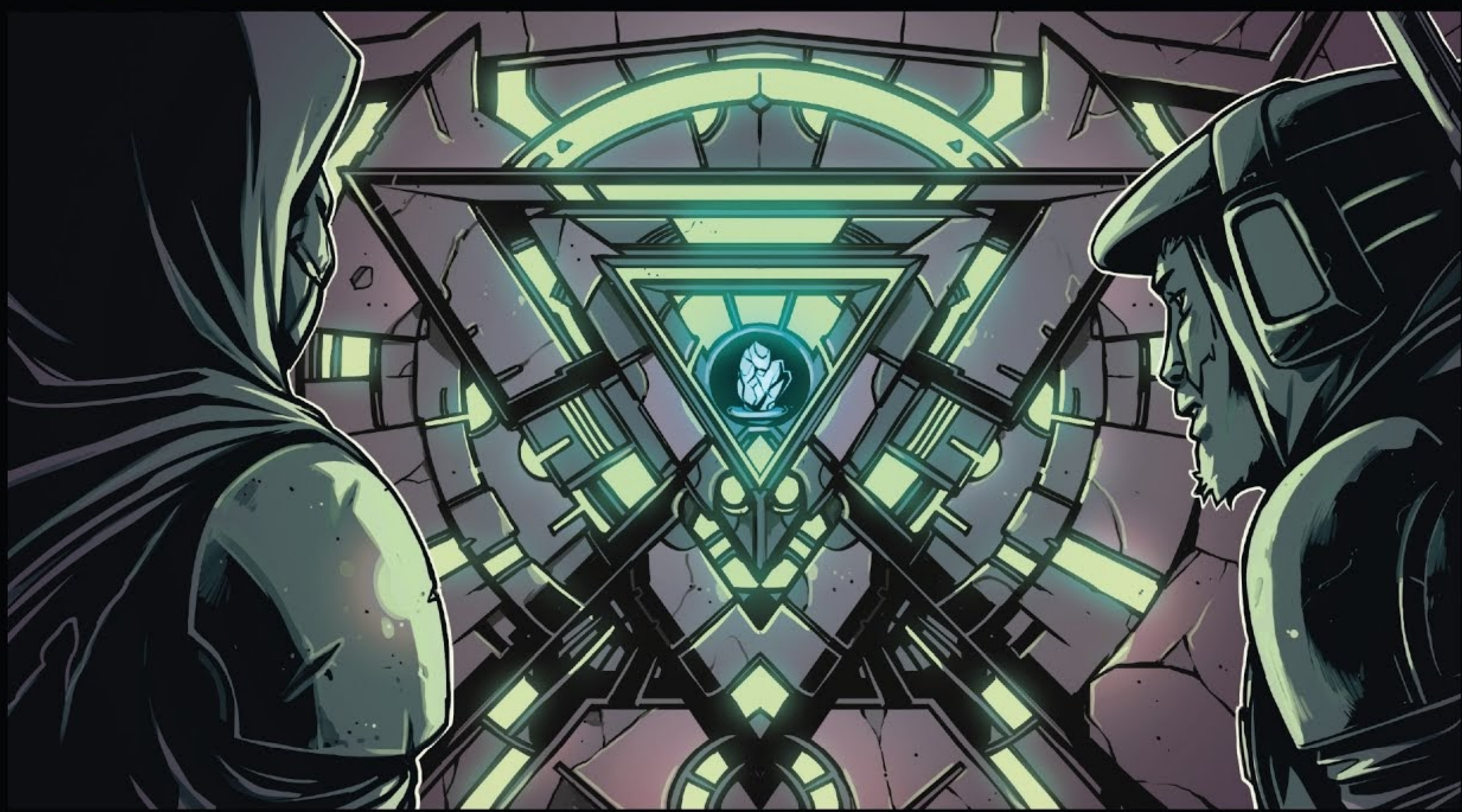

ANYWAY, NEVER MIND ALL THAT. TAKE THE THIRD LEFT, AND, WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T TOUCH ANYTHING YELLOW.
NOKK...

GUYS? GUYS, ARE YOU THERE?
LOOK.



THE ANSWER'S NO.
BUT--THAT'S GOTTA BE THE TREASURE. "PRICELESS TOTEM IDOL," RIGHT? WE COULD JUST T--
NO.

IT'S AN EASY SCORE! C'MON, NOKK--WE BOTH HAVE A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS GIG!
AND WE BOTH WANT A REPUTATION AS THE BEST.

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THERE'S THIS CRAZY TRACTOR BEAM THINGY THAT MAKES A TOTAL MESS.

WHOA. THAT'S TRAPPER PEHK...

D...DON'T... DON'T T-TRUST HER...

ROOAAARRR
SNAP!
NOKK!
GET AWAY FROM H--
NO BLASTERS! NO BLAAAAAA--
WOOOOD
AAAAAA--!
N-NOKK...? NOKK, ARE YOU--
I... I...

I TOLD YOU WE SHOULD USE ELECTRO CUDGELS.
HEH.

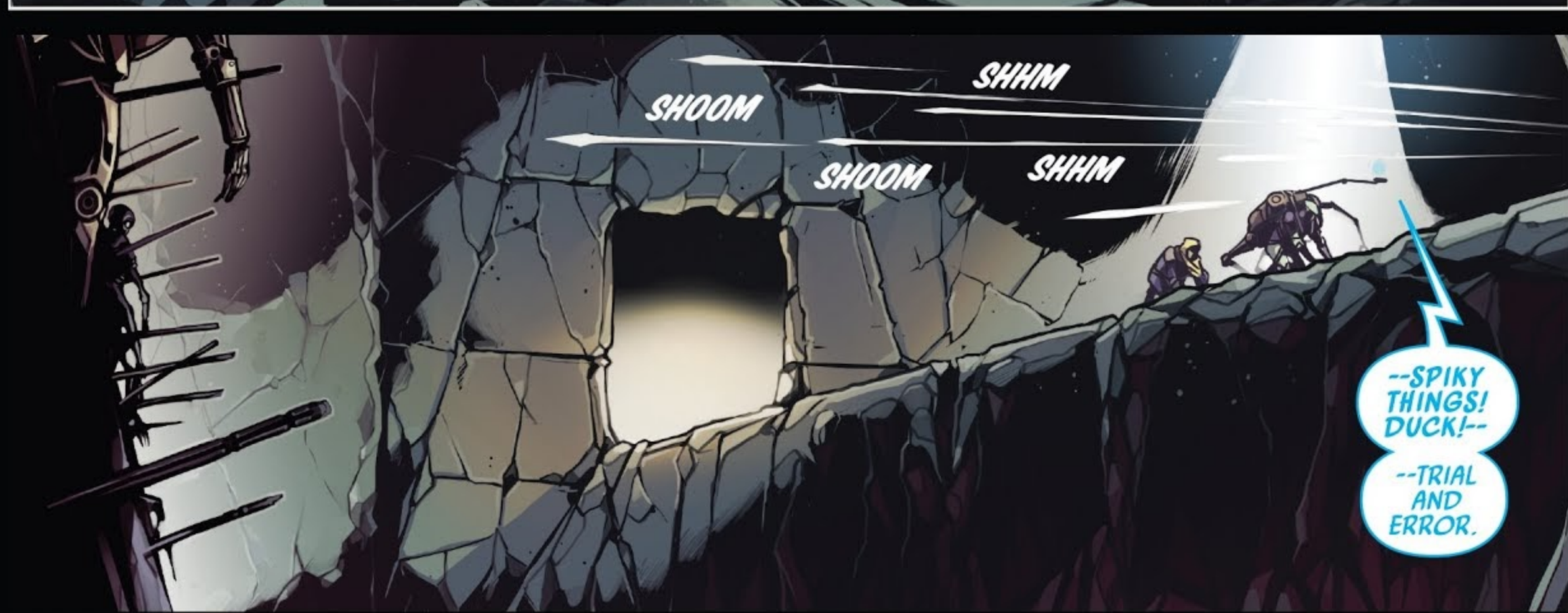
YOU SEE THAT, LADY? TRAPPER PEHK'S THE FIRST GUY TO EVER HEADBUTT A GUNDARK, AND HE JUST GOT SWALLOWED LIKE A ROOKIE.
YOU WANNA CHANGE YOUR STORY HERE?

I...=KOFF=...LOOK, I DIDN'T WANT TO DEMORALIZE YOU, BUT--TRUTH IS--

--WE'RE NOT THE FIRST HUNTERS YOU'VE HIRED.

I MEAN--C'MON! NONLETHAL TRANDOSHAN? YOU ARE SO FAR DOWN THE LIST.

BUT THIS IS COMPLETELY A GOOD THING, OKAY?
ANCIENT TEXTS ARE ALL VERY WELL, BUT THERE'S NOTHING QUITE AS RELIABLE AS A LITTLE, AH--


SHOOM
SHHM
SHOOM
SHHM
--SPIKY THINGS! DUCK!--
--TRIAL AND ERROR.

AND THE REAL BEAUTY IS, WHEN IT'S ALL OVER AND DONE WITH, YOU'LL BE TOP OF THE LEAGUE.
STAY LEFT! STAY LEFT!
NO MORE COMPETITION! EVEN THAT SHOW-OFF SQUOXX BARELY MADE IT TO THE LAIR! YOU'LL HAVE FIRST PICK OF THE BIG CONTRACTS!

BIIING
BIIING
THAT'S A DESPICABLE WAY OF THINKING.
KINDA RIGHT, THOUGH.
STRIKE THE HOLY CHIMES! STRIKE THEM HARDER!

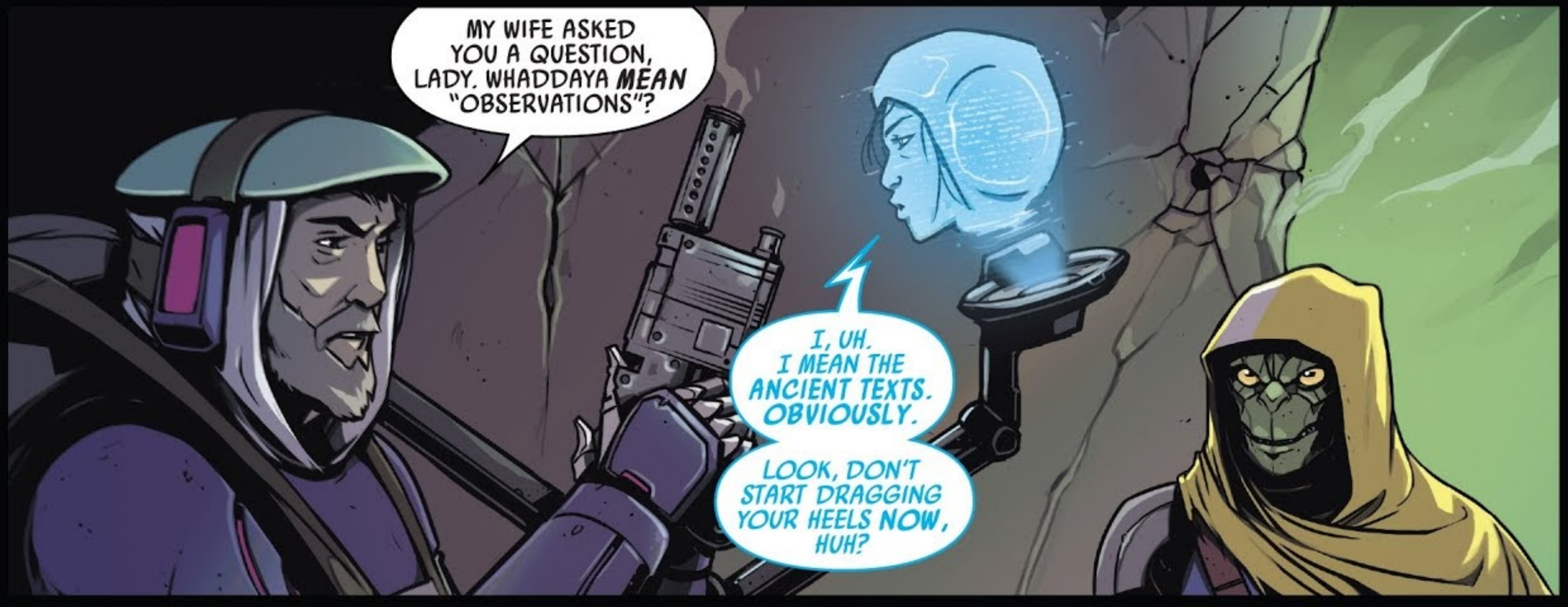
WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS, WHY NO BLASTERS? WHAT WAS THAT WEIRD SHOCK WAVE BACK THERE WHEN I SHOT IT?
NEVER MIND THAT! SPIKY THINGS! MORE SPIKY TH--

ANSWER THE QUESTION, SHRILL HUMAN.

=SIGH= YOU GUYS ARE DETERMINED TO BE DEMORALIZED, HUH? JUMP!
OKAY, FINE-- THE SHADOWFANG BEAST IS A BIOCONSTRUCT FROM THE HUNDRED YEARS' DARKNESS. IT GENERATES A RESONANCE-ABSORPTIVE SHIELD. YOU BLAST IT, YOU'RE JUST CHARGING IT UP.
BY MY OBSERVATIONS? COUPLE MORE SHOTS, IT'LL GO UP LIKE A SUN. EVEN A NULL SUIT COULDN'T SAVE YOU.

YOU'RE LUCKY YOUR MAN'S SUCH A BAD SHOT, LADY.
HOLD IT. WHAT DO YOU MEAN, OB--
THERMODRONES!

KRAK KRAK
KRAK


MY WIFE ASKED YOU A QUESTION, LADY. WHADDAYA MEAN "OBSERVATIONS"?
I, UH. I MEAN THE ANCIENT TEXTS. OBVIOUSLY.
LOOK, DON'T START DRAGGING YOUR HEELS NOW, HUH?

YOU'RE BASICALLY THERE.

THE LAIR.

I GUESS THAT'S WHERE THE *REAL* TREASURE WAS, RIGHT? LOOKS *LONG GONE*.

HMM? OHH, I EXPECT DASTARDLY RAIDERS MADE OFF WITH IT *CENTURIES* AGO. LUCKY WE'RE NOT HERE FOR *THAT*.

LISTEN, I HATE TO BE *ALARMIST*, BUT WITH SOME OF THE *OTHER* GUYS THE MONSTER SORTA SEEMED TO *KNOW* THEY *WERE COMING*, SO, UH...

RRAWRRA

OH CRAP.

YEEEAH. SO YOU MIGHT WANNA START RUNNI--

NO.

YOU DO THE QUESTIONABLE ARCHAEOLOGY, HUMAN. *WE'LL* HANDLE THE *BEASTS*.

W-WHAT SHE *MEANS* IS, SITUATIONS LIKE THIS, R-RUNNING'S THE *WORST* THING YOU CAN DO.

NOW!

KRAASH

WHIIIIIIIINE
MONSTERS GOT A TENDENCY TO CHASE, SEE?
IT...IT HAS TO DIE...
WELL, WELL...

SQUOXX. KING PRANA'S INDOMITABLE PRIME HUNTER.
YOU'RE LOOKIN' KINDA DOMITABLE THERE, PAL. I TAKE IT THIS SHE-MYNOCK HIRED YOU TOO?
SHE...SHE THOUGHT SHE DID... =HEHHH=

K-KING PRANA AIN'T ABOUT TO LET SOME JUMPED-UP NEW SYNDICATE GET A BETTER MONSTER THAN HIM. I PRETENDED TO TAKE THE JOB--B-BUT I WAS GONNA KILL THE CRITTER!
Y-YOU DO IT, ROOKIES! YOU DO IT, AND YOU GET ME OUTTA HERE! HE'LL REWARD YA!
YOU UNTRUSTWORTHY #$%&!
TRY NOT TO TALK. OR LISTEN TO THAT AWFUL WOMAN. WE'LL HELP YOU.
UH, HON? I DON'T WANNA SEEM INSECURE HERE, BUT--COULD YA MAYBE STOP BEING SO NICE TO OUR MURDEROUS NUMBER-ONE COMPETITOR?
IT'S BITTEN OFF HIS LEKKU, WINLOSS. HE'LL BE DEAD IN AN HOUR.
FINE. I SUPPOSE IT'S NOT HONORABLE TO JUST--LET A GUY DIE, OR WHATEVER.
SSSS!
I HAVE NO PROBLEM TAKING THE LIFE OF A SENTIENT BEING WHO'S CHOSEN TO RISK IT.
I JUST THOUGHT THE WRETCH WOULD BE EASIER TO USE AS BAIT IF HE THINKS WE'RE HELPING HIM.
'TIL THE STARS FALL DOWN, HON.
SCOUT US AN AMBUSH SPOT, YOU ODIOUS SENTIMENTALIST--

"--AND HAND ME MY *CUDGEL*."

Y-YOU *SLIMEHEADS!* Y-YOU *TOTAL* BOTTOM-FEEDING VARACTYL-FANCYING SL--

IT'S NOT *GOING* FOR IT! IT'S NOT TAKING THE *BAIT*...

...

RESONANCE... *SOUND*...

DAMN.

WHAT?

IT HEARD US *COMING*. AND THE ARCHAEOLOGIST SAID IT HAS A--WHAT--A "*RESONANCE-ABSORPTIVE FIELD*"?

I THINK IT'S *BLIND*. I THINK IT *HEARS* ITS WAY THROUGH THE MAZE...

WINLOSS... YOU RECALL ME SAYING I THINK YOU TALK TOO MUCH?
Y-YEAH...?

I WAS LYING. I LOVE YOUR VOICE MORE THAN ANYTHING.
R-REALLY?

REALLY.
SO, USE IT!
OH NO.

THIS IS COMPLETELY UNREASONABLE MARITAL BEHAVIOR! I WILL NEVER BE ON BOARD WITH YOUR WEIRDO REPTILIAN IDEA OF ROMANCE!
HEH. HEAD FOR THE ARCH, BELOVED! KEEP PRATTLING!
ROAR

THERE! A BROKEN SCALE BY ITS MOUTH! I KNEW THE HARPOON DID SOME DAMAGE!
IF I EVER GET OUTTA THIS, I DEMAND THAT YOU TELL ME I'M RIGHT ABOUT SOMETHING AT LEAST ONCE A DAY!

TIME TO TALK TRANSPORTATION, SCRAWNY MAMMAL.
AND PAYMENT.
YEEAH... ABOUT THAT.

SEE, I'VE LOOKED AT THE FINANCES, AND BASED ON YOUR PERFORMANCE, I THINK WHAT I'M ACTUALLY PREPARED TO PAY YOU IS, OHHH, LET'S SAY--
--NOTHING.

SSSS.
YOU... BUT... BUT...

WE WILL EUTHANIZE THE BEAST. WE WILL PUNCTURE ITS BRAIN AND TELL YOUR BOSS THE FAULT IS YOURS.
NAH, YOU WON'T. ETHICAL TRANDOSHAN, RIGHT? YOU'RE WAY TOO SOFT FOR THAT.

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HOLD THIS A SEC, WOULDJA?
NULL SUIT.
YEAH, LOOK, IT'S POSSIBLE I MAY HAVE BEEN A SMIDGE-- ECONOMICAL WITH THE TRUTH.

THERE I WAS, INNOCENTLY STEALING A HOLY TREASURE, WHEN THE DUMB CRITTER WENT AND SWALLOWED ME WHOLE.
AND OF COURSE I COULDN'T JUST CALL IN SOME GOONS WITH GUNS--
--BECAUSE THE FIELD DISCHARGE WOULD'VE KILLED YOU TOO.

EXACTLY! I KNEW YOU WERE A SMART REPTILE!
WELL, I FIGURED THE BEST COURSE WAS TO HIRE SOME PROFESSIONALS TO COME KNOCK IT OUT BEFORE IT DIGESTED ME.
THEN MANIPULATE THEM INTO KILLING IT.

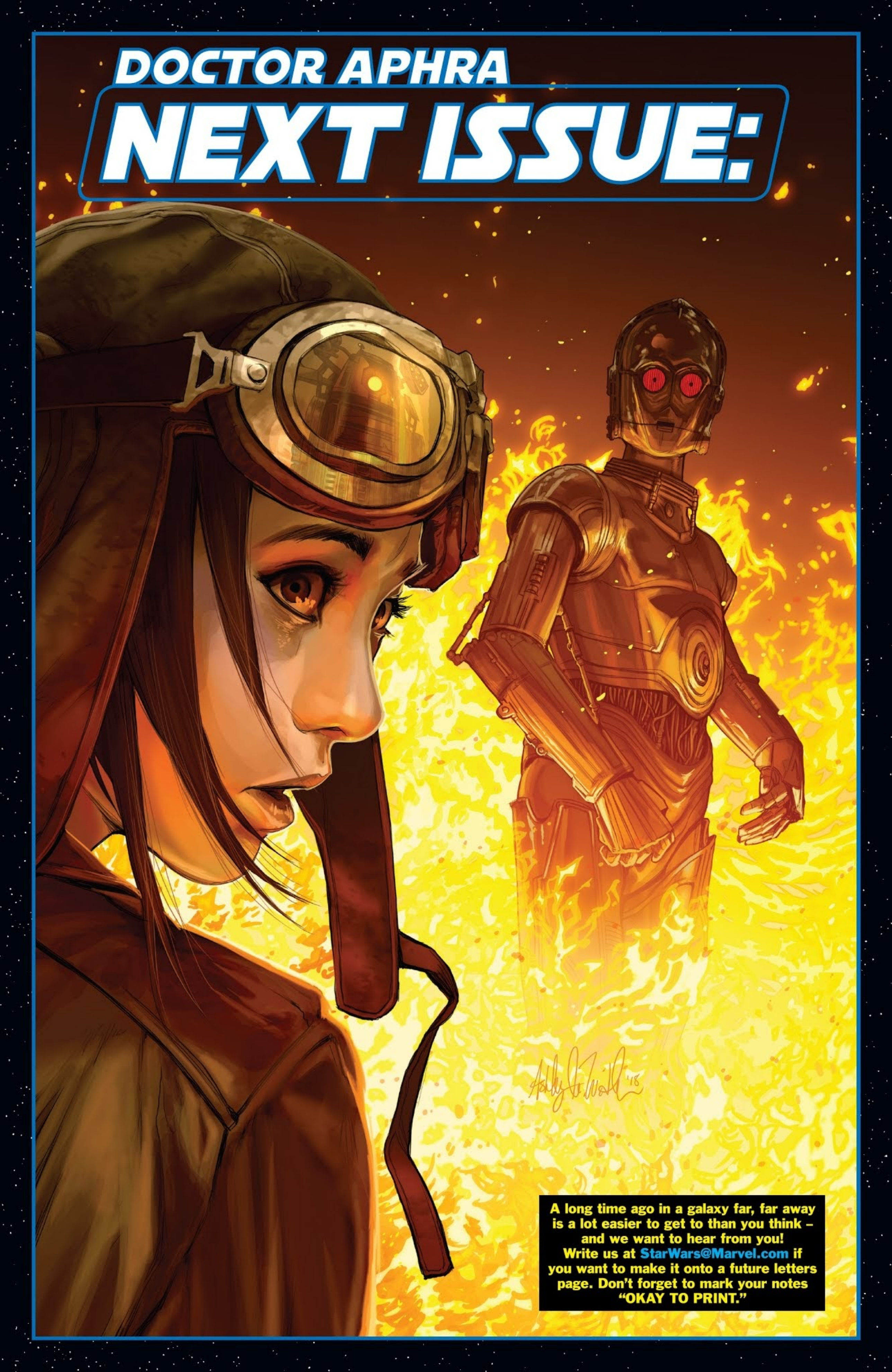
ONLY-- GENTLY, Y'KNOW? SO I COULD GET OUT.
ANY ARCHAEOLOGIST WOULDA DONE THE SAME.

NOKK? CAN...CAN WE SHOOT HER NOW?
OH, DON'T BE LIKE THAT. YOU'RE LITERALLY THE LAST MONSTER HUNTERS IN THIS SECTOR. SEIZE THE WEIRDLY RAREFIED AND ETHICALLY CHALLENGED MOMENT!
LET'S CHALK IT UP TO EXPERIENCE AND CALL IT EVEN.

SO GLAD YOU UNDERSTAND. OKAY, BYE!
BUT--

HUSBAND, WOULD YOU THINK LESS OF ME IF I BELATEDLY CHANGED MY VOCATION AND DEDICATED MY ENTIRE LIFE TO REVENGE?
NO. MAYBE.
=SIGH= YES.
LISTEN. I KNOW YOU DON'T WANT TO HEAR THIS, BUT...ABOUT THAT TUTORIAL DROID BACK ON TATOOINE.
REALLY. NOW? CHOOSE YOUR WORDS WITH GREAT CARE, WINLOSS.

THE... THE IDOL. BUT H--
PICKPOCKETING ROUTINES.
THE SORTSA SCUM WE DEAL WITH, I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL.
I...
WINLOSS, I DON'T SAY THIS ENOUGH, BUT, UH.
WELL, I. UM.
IT'S OKAY, HON. I KNOW.
'TIL THE STARS FALL DOWN.
The End.


DOCTOR APHRA
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